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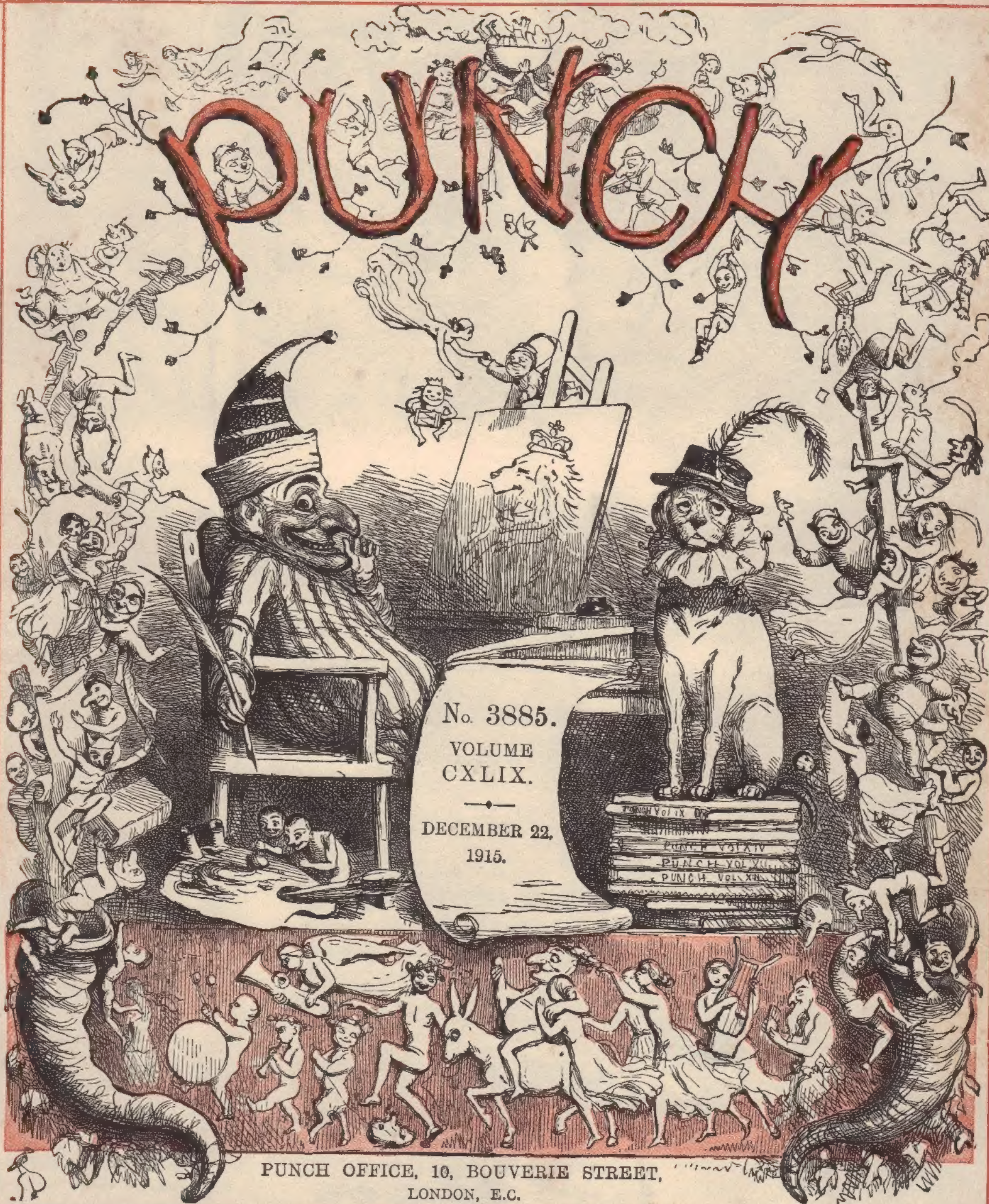
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"Why didn't you ask her to send you an Onoto?"

Send a pen that does not need a filler.

A filler is bound to get broken at the Front. The Onoto needs no filler; it fills itself from any ink supply, and cleans the nib while filling.

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tion. You send it out to your friend at the Front full of ink ready for immediate use.

The Military-size Onoto Pen is just the right size for a soldier's pocket.

The Onoto Pen is a British invention, produced by a British Company with British Capital. It stands alone as the one really satisfactory Self-filling Safety Pen

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THE Pen

The Right Christmas Present for the
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THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO., LTD.

Do not make the mistake of sending the wrong kind of Pen to the front. Send an Onoto, the Pen the soldier wants because it never leaks, needs no filler, and is always ready for use. You send it out full of ink ready to write. The Military size exactly fits the Soldier's Pocket.

Black Vulcanite, 10/6
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**When Soldier Friends
are Home on Leave,**

always have **Lea & Perrins' Sauce** on the dining table. It gives the finishing touch to the enjoyment of the meal.

Owing to its **QUALITY** and concentration, a few drops only are sufficient to give a delightfully appetising flavour to the plainest dish.

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A Seasonable and
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Brought originally from France by a gentleman of the body-guard of "Prince Charlie," the recipe was given to Mac-kinnon of Strathaird as a souvenir for assisting the Prince to escape the English frigates. Since then its secret has been carefully guarded, and for over 170 years its manufacture has been carried on by successive members of the same family.

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Table Water

The Purest in the World.

IT is bottled in the Stretton Hills and is unique as a beverage for all who suffer from uric acid troubles. Its solvent properties are remarkable.

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The "GNIDROC" COAT

LIGHTWEIGHT.	3lbs.	Price 65/-
MEDIUM	3½lbs.	.. 84/-
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FLEECE LININGS		42/-

Write giving chest measure and length.

An Officer writes:—"Please send me one of your Superb Coats."

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THE "GNIDROC"



"Record" is a perfectly original brown-boot-polish. Its points of originality are these: Staining light-brown boots to the dark rich "Record" tone. Staining fast. Polishing hard and bright. And polishing quickly, because of containing the highest-grade waxes ever put in a polish.

"Record" Quality Stain-Polish.

A very little will readily stain and polish all your tans—belts, bags, saddles, as well as boots. Because used sparingly, "Record" will not soil your hands or clothes.

4½d. and 6d. Use it daily for boots, belts, leggings, saddles, trunks. Get a tin from your Grocer or Boot Dealer.

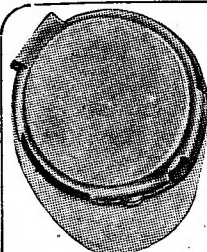
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Trial Tins.

Send 3d. in stamps for large Trial Tin of "Record" Quality Stain-Polish or 4d. for a sample of "Record" Superior Black Boot Polish in addition.

Record
Polish Co.
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Please send me a trial tin of "Record" Quality Stain-Polish (also a tin of "Record" Superior Black Polish), for which I enclose..... in stamps to cover postage.

Name.....
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A Wrist Watch and Hunter Combined.

With the Army Protector you can convert any wrist watch into a miniature Hunter—thus assuring absolute protection to the watch, and minimising risks to the wearer.

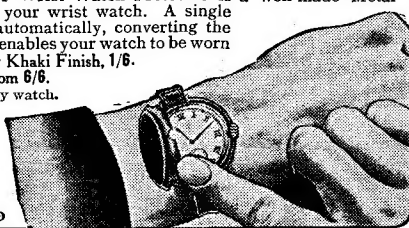
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Leather Covered, 2/6. Solid Silver, from 6/6.
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If unable to obtain from your own Jeweller send stamps or postal orders direct to—

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—have stood the actual Test of the Trenches

Read what a Major of the Royal Irish writes: "After two tours of four days and nights in the trenches, in slush and water, I can say that no damp penetrated my Perth-made boots. The leather sewing and 'Dri-ped' Soles are undoubtedly water-tight."

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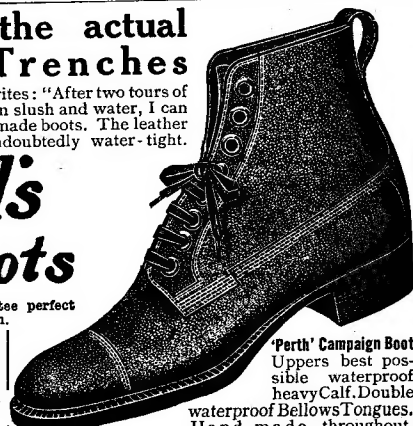
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Trust the man behind the boot.

Specialists in good wearing footwear. (Est. over 100 years) Foreign orders receive special attention. Write Now for New Footwear Catalogue. ☉



'Perth' Campaign Boot
Uppers best possible waterproof-heavy Calf. Double waterproof Bellows Tongues. Hand-made throughout. Outer sole, right back to heel, of stout waterproof double-wearing 'Dri-ped' 32/6 Free



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*As supplied to the House
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To those desirous of
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Celebrated Brands—
BEN LAWERS
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FULL SIZE of any Two
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not forget the

BRITISH ARMY HORSES

At Home, in France,
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FUNDS URGENTLY NEEDED

THE R.S.P.C.A. Fund, the only Fund approved by
the Army Council, is providing the A.V.C. with
Hospitals for **3,750** horses, besides motor and
horse-drawn horse ambulances, horse tents, and many
other requirements.

More aid will be required as the War continues—will
you help?

All contributions (crossed Coutts and Co.) should be
forwarded to the Hon. Treasurer.

R.S.P.C.A. FUND

FOR

SICK & WOUNDED HORSES

105, Jermyn Street, London, S.W.

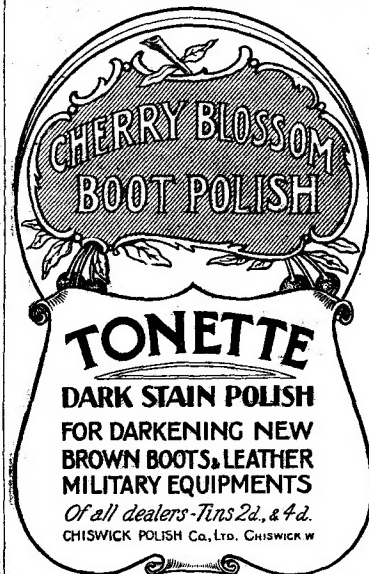
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Try our much appreciated 5lb.
air-tight canisters of Blended
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Carriage Paid to any address
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OFFICERS' RAINPROOF WAR KIT.

Gentlemen who prefer the
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ing military traditions,
should write for details of
our **#30 KIT**

—also for a gratis copy of
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book every young Officer
would do well to read—and
a specimen of "Omne Tem-
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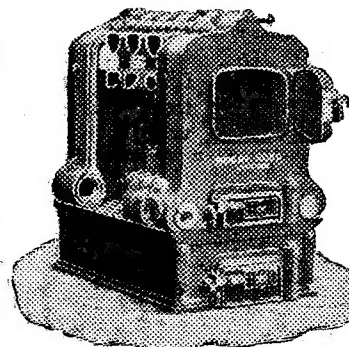
will give you a **WELL-WARMED HOUSE**
AT THE MINIMUM COST.

YOUR Xmas Coal Bill will probably cause you
anxiety this year on account of high prices,
and they cannot be expected to fall for some
time to come.

A Robin Hood Boiler and Beeston Radiators will
give you the same result as your open fires at one-
third of the cost, and will also reduce your servants'
work very considerably. For these two reasons
only, it is well worth your while to consider the
advisability of installing a heating apparatus, and
using a Robin Hood Boiler and Beeston Radiators.

**Clean, Comfortable &
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ROBIN HOOD BOILER.

The WILLETT LIGHT

The Modern Petrol-
Air Gas System for
Country Houses.

Beautifully soft incan-
descent light from No. 1
motor car petrol.

Economical, simple,
safe and reliable.

The Gas can be used
for lighting, heating
and cooking.

No expert attention.
No starting or stopping.
No complications.
No smell or noise.
Write for Booklet "K."

W. WILLETT,
38c, SLOANE SQUARE,
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Established over 40 years

"BEAUTIFULLY COOL AND SWEET SMOKING."

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT TOBACCO

Packed in varying degrees of strength to suit every class of smoker.

Player's Gold Leaf Navy Cut } Per oz. Also PLAYER'S NAVY CUT DE
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PLAYER'S "WHITE
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TINS at

Per oz.
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1/6 and 3/-
respectively.

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES

HAVE A WORLD-WIDE REPUTATION.

They are made from fine quality Virginia Tobacco and sold in two strengths—
MILD and MEDIUM.

MILD (Gold Leaf) **MEDIUM**
100 for 3/8; 50 for 1/10 100 for 3/-; 50 for 1/7
Smaller sizes of packing at proportionate prices.

IN PACKETS AND TINS FROM ALL TOBACCONISTS AND STORES.

For Wounded British Soldiers and Sailors in Military Hospitals at Home and for
the Front at Duty Free Rates. Terms on application to JOHN PLAYER
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Issued by the Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Gt. Britain & Ireland), Ltd.

A Practical Idea.

Perhaps the worst of the campaigner's trials now
onwards will be in the condition of the ground.

His BOOTS? No greater regard can be shown
than to send out a pair of his size. It may
seem rather a responsibility to select footwear
for a soldier, but buying at Manfield's makes
the task simple and sure.

No. M489 is given as a suggestion—a War-
tested and thoroughly efficient boot that is
praised by every Military
man who wears it.

Write for Catalogue to—
MANFIELD & SONS
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Branches throughout
London and United
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M489. 35/-



Manfield
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THE TREATMENT OF INDIGESTION

C THE difference between the relief of indigestion and
the permanent removal of its cause is a question of
treatment. Charcoal treatment is not only palliative—it is
definitely curative.

Indigestion in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred is
caused by the fermentation of undigested food in the
digestive tract. This fermentation causes flatulence,
distension of the stomach, and acidity; and in the process
of putrefaction foul gases arise, causing wind, unpleasant
tastes in the mouth, and other discomforts. You may
relieve these symptoms by the use of palliative drugs
and artificial digestives, but to remove their cause you
must arrest the fermentation.

Carbon (charcoal) is not a drug; it has no direct action on
any organ of the body; it is neither astringent, aperient,
tonic, nor sedative—but it arrests the fermentation.
Charcoal has a natural affinity for impurities, seizing
upon them, rendering them innocuous and carrying them
out of the system.

Charcoal taken internally filters the food in the intes-
tines and prevents the fermentation of waste matter,
thus removing the very cause of indigestion. The prin-
ciple is the same as in the old-fashioned carbon filter
for water.

Bragg's Pure Vegetable Charcoal is the only palatable
form in which charcoal may be administered. It is essen-
tial that charcoal for internal use should be absolutely
free from grittiness. Bragg's Charcoal is ground finer
than flour by a special process, and is quite tasteless.

You may take Bragg's Charcoal in many forms—as a
powder, capsule, lozenge, or (in its most popular form)
as a biscuit. Bragg's Charcoal Biscuits are quite pleas-
ant—not at all like medicine—just plain, crisp biscuits—
a fitting finish to any meal.

In the continued use of Bragg's Charcoal lies the secret
of banishing indigestion. Unlike drugs, Bragg's Char-
coal can never harm you, and you do not need to be
continuously increasing the dose.

You are invited to send for a week's free supply
to-day. Send four penny stamps to J. L. Bragg,
Ltd., 14, Wigmore Street, London, W., for a
generous free sample. Please mention PUNCH
or fill in the coupon at foot.

All Doctors Recommend

BRAGG'S CHARCOAL

All Chemists sell

BRAGG'S CHARCOAL

Biscuits, 1/-, 2/- & 4/- per box.
Powder, 2/- per bottle.
Lozenges, 1/1½ per box.
Tablets, 1/1½ per box.
Capsules, 2/- per box.

☞ Cut out this
coupon for a
week's free
supply.

Send me
a free sam-
ple 1/- tin of
Bragg's Charcoal
Biscuits, Powder,
Capsules & Lozenges,
and I will give the
remedy a fair trial. I en-
close 4d. to pay postage.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Cut this coupon out and post to J. L. BRAGG, LTD., 14, Wigmore Street, London, W.

POPE & BRADLEY

Civil, Military & Naval Tailors

Contractors for Officers' Equipment to the War Office.



TRENCH SPECIALITIES

THE winter Trench garments of the house of Pope and Bradley are designed by Dennis Bradley after consultation with senior officers of the Service, and every point of utility and durability has been studied, so that for active service the campaigner may be independent of the elements.

The new military waterproof has been designed expressly as an all-weather coat for the Winter Campaign, and is absolutely indispensable to the kit of every officer. The "Trencher" coat is made of closely woven double proof yarn, with a thin oil skin lining and an extra detachable fleece lining. Its texture is impervious to the heaviest storm, it does not cake with mud, and it is practically wire-proof. Light in weight, with the detachable fleece lining it is equally adaptable to muggy weather or the severest frost.

By an ingenious device it is convertible from a short coat for water-logged trenches to a long coat for driving rain. The "Trencher" is made in varied sizes to fit any figure, and may be ordered by post by stating chest measurement and height. The price is £5 15s. 6d. cash with order.

Service Jackets from £3 13 6
Slacks £1 7 6
Bedford Cord Breeches (Buckskin strapped) . . £2 12 6
British Warm £3 15 0

New Naval and Military Kit List, containing particulars of every service requirement, will be forwarded upon application.

**14 OLD BOND STREET, W. &
11-13 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C.**

The Food-Drink which promotes fitness and efficiency **HORLICK'S MALTED MILK**

A glass of Horlick's Malted Milk is always the best invigorator. Taken before exercise it will give strength and endurance, and after strenuous exertion there is no better pick-me-up. At all times it gives and maintains fitness and stamina, and is especially useful to those doing Government work.

**SUPERIOR TO TEA, COFFEE,
COCOA & BEEF EXTRACTS.**

Ready in a moment by stirring briskly in hot or cold water only. No cooking required.

Served in Hotels and Restaurants.

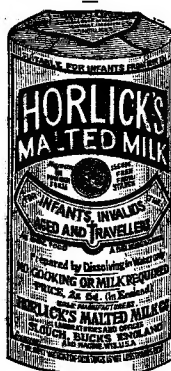
Also available as delicious food tablets to be dissolved in the mouth. They relieve thirst and supply sufficient nourishment to maintain strength and prevent fatigue.

NO ADVANCE IN PRICES.

In Sterilised Glass Bottles, at 1/6, 2/6, and 1/-, of all Chemists and Stores. The Tablets also in convenient Pocket Flasks, at 6d. and 1/- each.

Liberal Sample sent post free for 3d. in stamps.

HORLICK'S MALTED MILK CO., Slough, Bucks.



THE PACKAGE.



DINNER TIME

TO-DAY, if there is less dining in Restaurants and in the large Hotels, there is more dining at home. In these conditions there may be less choice of beverages, but for the man who likes a glass of whisky with his meal there is every satisfaction possible if a bottle of Stewart's is kept handy. Think of this when you take a friend home to dine. He will enjoy his dinner more, and think of you with pleasure the morning after. Only a good whisky—such as Stewart's—can achieve this result for both of you.

Three Brands of Different Ages:

"GOLD MEDAL" is a fully-matured Whisky of good character, smooth and mellow, over 7 years old. 4/3 per bottle. 51/- per case.

"FINEST" is for those who prefer very old-matured Whisky, over 10 years old. 4/9 per bottle. 57/- per case.

"NONPAREIL" is the most excellent 15 year old Scotch liqueur Whisky obtainable. 5/6 per bottle. 66/- per case.

J. & G. Stewart, Ltd.

Anderson Place, Bonnington, Edinburgh;
Temple Bar House, 23/28 Fleet St., London;
and at Manchester.

CHARIVARIA.

SYNTHETIC rubber has once more been discovered, according to a notice issued by the Frankfort University. This time it is attributed to "co-operation between the local professors." It is supposed that they evolved it out of their inner consciences, which are notoriously elastic. * *

Having read a moving description of "Meatless and Fatless Days" in Germany, a tender-hearted Briton writes: "Christian charity may forbid us wishing them, even in war-time, Heatless and Hatless days, but no exception can be taken to our providing them with Fruitless and Bootless ones." * *

War is a wonderful thing. During the second battle of Ypres the following indent was received by the Stationery Office at the Front:—"Kindly let bearer have 4,000 yards of tape, red, for use with respirators." And so for once this material, instead of stifling military ardour, actually enabled it to breathe. * *

We learn from *The Woman's Magazine* that the work of a famous black-and-white artist is in such constant demand that he can only escape a breakdown by rushing off to his cattle-ranch in Western America. Lest our readers should imagine that one of our own eminent draughtsmen is pointed at we hasten to say that none of them will admit to being a cow-puncher. * *

An officer recently received the following postcard from his little daughter, who has just gone to a boarding-school for the first time:—"MY DEAR DADDY,—Please answer by return. Is a lieutenant's daughter higher than a captain's niece?" * *

Civil servants, professional men and others of similar position who have been called up for service in Austria are allowed to wear a yellow armlet to distinguish them from soldiers of inferior social status. If the use of French expressions were still permissible out there they would be known as the "jaunesse dorée." * *

In a peerage case the other day it was pointed out that in the Journals

of the House of Lords certain names of peers had against them a cross, a star, or a tick, but no one seemed to know whether these marks indicated that they were present or absent. Lord ATKINSON said he had found the word "hic" against one name, but with commendable discretion did not speculate as to what that may have implied. * *

Italy has found another use for old newspapers. Rolled together as tightly as possible, they are steeped in paraffin and cut into segments, one of which is sufficient to heat a soldier's rations. If the British War Office should adopt the idea it may be possible by a judicious selection from our Press to dispense with the paraffin. * *

entertaining the representatives of the rival belligerent Powers at the same time. * *

A serious attempt is to be made to clear the trenches from rats; and it is found that four trained rat-killers can clear twenty miles in thirty days. As there are ten thousand miles of trenches on the Western Front alone it is suggested that the ranks of the Highland Regiments should be searched for Pied Pipers. * *

Extract from school-girl's examination paper:—"The Lines of Torres Vedras were lines written during the Peninsular War. Torres Vedras was a very clever and strong-willed man. He wrote these lines to his daughter to commemorate this dreadful war." * *

In the case of a youthful jockey making two thousand a year the King's Bench has decided that as an "infant" he is not liable to pay income-tax. Several elderly millionaires are now asking whether this applies to second childhood. * *

The following letter was recently intercepted by the principal of a girls' school, addressed to Miss D. Robinson, Girls' College, Shrimpsville-on-Sea:—

Junior School,
— College for Boys,
Shrimpsville-on-Sea.

MY DEAR DOROTHY,—Frightfully sorry I have not written before. How are you? Are they any good at hockey at your Coll.? I am not in the 1st XI for footer worse luck. I am a section officer & a music officer frightful swank eh what! Are they decent girls at your College?

With lots of love & kisses from

TOM SMITH.

P.S. I am frightfully sorry but I have forgotten you surname if Robinson is wrong.

Note.—It was.

"An unexploded 12 in. shell has been found at the Corporation refuse destructor works at Bradford. The assumption is that it was brought home by a soldier, who thoughtlessly disposed of it by throwing it into the ashpit." *Daily Paper.*

As a 12 in. shell weighs 850 lbs. it seems a very large assumption.

"To clear the complexion. First I buy a yard of Turkish towelling which I make up into two washing-gloves: one of these I keep for the face only which I boil every week." *Home Chat.*

Personally we fry ours, but only once a month.



IN DARKEST LONDON.
Nervous Lady. "TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET, PLEASE."

A correspondent reminds us that BROWNING in his "Grammarians' Funeral" had a prescient admiration for the British Press of to-day:—

"That's the appropriate country, there man's thought
Rarer, intenser,
Upgathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes at the censor!" * *

In a laudatory speech about Germany's allies Herr NAUMANN referred to Bulgaria as a country that is washed by the Black and Aegean Seas, and will soon reach the Adriatic as well. Like *Lady Macbeth* Bulgaria wants a lot of washing, and for the same reason. * *

It is a mistake to suppose that America is not suffering financially through the War. We learn that President WILSON has been put to the expense of two diplomatic dinners this season, instead of one, in order to avoid

A NON-STOPPER.

["To save expenditure in printing," the Northfleet (Kent) Urban Council have decided not to punctuate the official reports of their proceedings."—*Observer*.]

Mr. Punch, sympathising as he does with all kinds of economy, here tries his hand at a similar retrenchment, going even a step further and eliminating capital letters; but never again!

the friendly neutral who has been visiting germany austria bulgaria greece and turkey at the instigation of mr punch has now presented his report which runs as follows

my last place of sojourn was berlin where i was fortunate in being able to take part in the celebration of herr bode's seventieth birthday no one would guess that there was any war so enthusiastic were the crowds and so numerous and worthy were the presents which included a genuine victorian leonardo another sign of the perfect tranquility of berlin and incidentally of the untruth that there is any food shortage was a policeman standing by the brandenburger gate who though a copper was not requisitioned by the war office and though exceedingly plump was unmolested by the housewives of the city

passing on to vienna i was admitted to the honour of an interview with the aged emperor who is in the very pink of senile decay he said it is not true that the austrians are tired of the war on the contrary we enjoy every minute of it and its popularity increases daily nor are we in need of food it is only the other half of my empire that is hungary loud laughter i then essayed the balkans and succeeded in obtaining an interview with the royal recluse to gain admittance to his present throne room which so great is his people's love for him is in the lower basement of the chief safe deposit of sofia was the work of only a mere week and i was then allowed to speak to him not directly but through a perforated wall of steel several inches thick and not until after i had been searched to the bone we had however a charming talk and he reaffirmed his devotion to the kaiser and his conviction that after the war is over bulgaria will be second in power only to the german empire

in turkey whither i next passed eager as i am to provide you sir with all the facts that can possibly flatter us i found complete contentment on every side except possibly among the armenians who however have not been heard to complain for some time possibly because they are dead having bought a copy of the times at yildiz kiosk where it is on sale daily and greatly in demand

i entered greece and had the felicity of interviewing the king who was gratified to hear that a play named after him is now holding the adelphi at least he thought it was called tino and i thought it was more tactful not to put him right but of course it is really tina he informed me that he spends all his waking hours and they are many wondering whether he loves england more than germany or germany more than england and some day he hopes to know always provided that he can keep venizelos at arms length while he is making up his mind

having thus fulfilled the mission with which you were so good as to entrust me i shall be glad to receive a cheque

MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO.

It was a murky night, and the room with its cheerful fire seemed particularly inviting when I entered and addressed myself to the man who was busily writing in a book.

"I've come at last," I said.

"Pleased to see you," he answered.

"I should have come long ago," I continued, "only, you see, Jones and I had a small bet as to who would stick out the longer. I find Jones went yesterday, so here I am."

"Yes, you are," he admitted, "but—"

"I'm five feet ten," I went on, interrupting him. "Chest thirty-nine—or forty, I'm not sure which. Not bad, eh?"

"Excellent," he agreed; "and I should say you weighed about twelve stone."

"Pretty right," I said admiringly; "but I hope you don't propose to multiply them all together and prove me the Beast in the Revelations."

He smiled gravely.

"Then there's my age," I went on. "Can you guess that? or shall we postpone further discussion of my statistics until I've seen the doctor? I'd better see him to-night and get it over. Suspense would be very painful."

"Yes, perhaps you had better. I fancy that's his step outside now."

He darted out of the room, and after a minute or two returned in company with a sombre-faced man with such a pronounced professional air that it seemed almost to form a halo round him.

"You want to see me?" he inquired briskly.

"It's usual, I believe," I said. "Shall I strip?"

"I don't think it will be necessary. Just tell me how you feel."

"I thought you always insisted on viewing the subject *in puris naturalibus*, but no matter. As regards your question, I feel all right."

"No drumming noises in the head?"

No sudden desires to do something rash?"

"None at all. Just ready to do what I'm ordered."

"That's right. What made you come here at all?"

"Duty alone," I told him.

"H'm," he murmured, raising his eyebrows. "Perhaps I'd better have a closer look at you. Come this way."

He led me across a court-yard into a snug surgery, through which we passed into a room filled with weird-looking instruments.

Having examined me with the aid of divers pieces of apparatus for about half-an-hour, he put them aside and turned to me.

"You're quite all right," he said.

"You've nothing to fear."

"Thanks," I said. "I feel as sound as a bell."

"You are. Good night."

"I suppose I may tell the other chap I'm perfectly fit?" I asked.

"If you want to," he said nonchalantly.

"The doctor has passed me," I told the inquisitor, "so we can soon polish off the rest of the business. I sign something, don't I, and get a shilling or so?"

A look of surprise spread over his face. "If the doctor says you're all right, I suppose you must be," he said slowly. "But what's that you said about a shilling?"

"Have you given up the time-honoured practice? I didn't know, but it doesn't matter anyway. Now what can I join? I think I should do rather well in the R.F.A."

His eyes suddenly lighted up with understanding. He rose and led me to the door.

"You must have mistaken the way in the fog," he said kindly. "The Recruiting Office is round the corner to the right."

"Then this?" I gasped.

"This," he said, "is the Lunatic Asylum. Mind the step."

But I had already fallen over it.

WAR THRIFT.

I JOURNEY by the Streatham tram

My own true love to see;

I used to buy sweet marjoram

For my sweet Marjorie.

But now Bellona rules the scene;

When I go there to tea

I take a dab of margarine

For my dear Marjorie.

From a bookseller's catalogue:—

"Coleridge's Ruins of the Ancient Marines." This hitherto unknown work should be acquired for the library of the Royal United Service Institution.



CAROLLING BY COMMAND.

GERMAN CHANCELLOR (*singing*). "GOD REST YOU, MERRY GERMANY,
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY."

KAISER. "A LITTLE LOUDER, BETHMANN; AND PUT MORE CONVICTION INTO IT."



Village Clergyman. "CAN I HELP YOU AT ALL?"

Clergyman. "WHAT SHALL I DO, THEN?"

Artilleryman. "YES, SIR, YOU CAN."

Artilleryman. "WELL, SIR, IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND GOING A BIT FURTHER UP THE STREET THE HORSES WILL UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE BETTER."

OUR CHILDREN'S CORNER. (A Point of Style.)

Is not this a charming letter from Isobel?

DEAR UNCLE PUNCH,—I thought you might like to know that Tony and I are writing a story, because Tony says these writer fellows make pots of money, and he knows a chap at school whose father is one, and he gets a shilling a word, and if we write a lot of words that would be ever so much, wouldn't it? And perhaps we'd get more for the big ones; and we're going to put it all into the War Loan and win the War, and then Father and Tom can come home again. It's quite easy except just the beginning, because we both got "Very good" for spelling last term, and I've thought of a splendid plot, and Tony's bought a book, "How to write Short Fiction," which tells us exactly how to do it.

I'll tell you all about it, Uncle Punch, because I know you're a literal old gentleman, and I expect you've had some practice at stories

yourself. You see, this is what the book says:—

"1. The plot must be striking and original. Ask yourself, 'Could anyone have thought of this?' and if the answer is 'Yes' it's no good." Well, that's all right, because Tony Sutherland is most awfully brave, and he's been out to the Front and got all the letters we can find in the paper after his name; and he's in love with Isobel Bruce, who is the prettiest girl in the county, and she refused him when he was a clerk before the War, but marries him when he comes home wounded. Many people couldn't have thought of that, could they? And you don't think it will matter their having our own Christian names, do you, because that will make it so autozoological, like *David Copperfield*, when we become famous?

"2. It must be topical." That means about the War, you know, so it's all right too.

"3. Grip your reader right away. Have a snap in the first sentence. It is a good plan to always as a general

rule begin (why did that make father laugh, Uncle Punch?) with the hero or heroine's name, and let it be an attractive one."

Now we come to the difficulty. I began: "Lieut. Tony Sutherland's, D.C.M., D.S.C., M.V.O., D.S.O., V.C., M.D., K.C. jaws snapped like steel," and Tony said that made it look as if it was his jaws that were D.C.M., etc.; so he put, "Lieut. Tony Sutherland, D.C.M., D.S.C., M.V.O., D.S.O., V.C., M.D., K.C.'s jaws," and I don't think that's right, because it looks as if the jaws had belonged to just the K.C. part. Do tell us which you'd say, Uncle Punch, and we'll let you read it before anyone. Yours always, ISOBEL.

[That is a very difficult question, dear Isobel, but I should try "The jaws of Lieut., etc." I'm sure it will be a lovely story.—U. P.]

"The sight of the men asleep on the parapet during these long nights always impresses me profoundly."—*Morning Paper*.

The spectacle would probably not be lost upon the enemy either.

A TERRITORIAL IN INDIA.

XII.

MY DEAR MR. PUNCH,—We Territorials in India are gradually coming to realise the significance of our position here. At first, misled by semi-official statements, we fondly imagined we had been sent out mainly for the purpose of being trained under favourable conditions in the gentle art of slaying Bosches. Months passed, and as the hot weather came upon us and we were split up into numerous detachments, which rendered war training for the time being almost impossible, we began to perceive our error.

Now over a year has elapsed since we landed in Bombay, and we are persuaded in our own minds that we are not, after all, destined to be useful in the manner of fighters, but to serve our purpose during the Great War by being merely ornamental. We have, in other words, come to the conclusion that it is our sole duty by the splendour of our appearance to impress the peoples of India with the might and glory of Britain. Some go so far as to assert that we were specially selected for this purpose by Lord KIRCHENER, after anxious consideration, on account of the matchless beauty and symmetry of our persons and the magnificence of our physique.

Still, whatever we are asked to do, we are patriotically determined to do it well, even if it is no more than to look beautiful. Consequently, when an inspection of our battalion by the General was announced a short time ago, we resolved to surpass ourselves. Such a creaking of starched tunics, such a glittering of equipment, such a flashing of bayonets, such a mingled aroma of hair-oil and tooth-paste, have never been known before in all India. In the short march to the *maidan*, dust had settled upon our mirror-like boots. Native cleaning boys were hastily summoned to kneel and restore our footgear to its pristine brilliance as we stood in review order on the parade ground, till the nose of the General's horse appeared round the corner.

There is generally some reason, if you look for it, underlying even the most puzzling actions of the Army authorities. We have recently been issued with serge uniforms for the cold weather, and I was at first surprised to find room in my tunic for a pillow,

the Company football and a washing bowl in addition to me. Even allowing for my rather emaciated condition—as a result of the hot-season—the proportions seemed altogether too generous. But I think I see now that it is meant as a gentle hint that my normal figure is not as impressively proportioned as it should be in order to awe the natives, and that it is up to me to develop it till it conforms to standard. Meanwhile I suppose the pillow, the Company football and the washing bowl will have to accompany me when I go on parade.

In view of the foregoing alleged explanation of our presence in India, there are naturally differences of opinion in the regiment as to what constitutes discipline. Some are all for rigid formalities and the harsh ways of the

the small matter of sloping arms from the stand-at-ease position. We used to count silently as we carried out the different motions—one, two, three, four—cutting the right hand away smartly at four. After a time there grew up a tendency to make the movements too hurried, so, instead of counting four, we began to count seven, moving only on the odd numbers—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. This, it was presently decided, made us too slow, so another method was adopted, and we were told to count—one and two and three and four.

These and similar changes inspired certain frivolous privates to invent other ways of ensuring uniformity of movement in manual drill. If you chanced to look into our bungalow one afternoon you would probably find one

man in a corner busily sloping arms as he murmurs to himself, "Twice one are two; twice two are four; twice three are six; twice four are eight." Another would be performing the same action while muttering "Mensa, mensa, mensam—mensae, mensae, mensa—mensae, mensae, mensas—mensarum, mensis, mensis." Yet another would be reciting—

"There is a happy land
Far, far away,
Where soldiers don't have stew
Three times a day."

And to justify the expectation—which in reality we all nurse at the bottom of our hearts—that some day we shall be required at



Small Boy (who has borrowed military boot of brother home from the Front). "THAT'LL FETCH FATHER CHRISTMAS."

martinet. Others believe in the most free-and-easy methods consistent with efficiency. It becomes a little confusing for the long-suffering private at times. Yesterday, when I was acting as Mess Orderly, the Battalion Orderly Sergeant chanced to be of the martinet type. At dinner-time he formed us up in companies, called us to attention, dressed us by the right, numbered us in a series of stentorian and bark-like orders, and sent us marching off in fours to our respective cookhouses, heads up and arms swinging, left, right, left, right. . . . Our Company Orderly Corporal, of the opposite school, bore it with resignation until we were out of earshot. Then he said quietly, "Halt! Fall out and get your—grub!"

We strive to increase our impressiveness by rightly paying great attention to ceremonial drill. No detail is considered too unimportant in our efforts after perfection. Take, for example,

the Front, we do not neglect to train assiduously in field work. If we expend much facetious argument as to whether shovels should properly be carried at the trail or at the slope, and whether the points of picks should or should not be burnished daily, this does not prevent us from getting underground with great speed and efficiency when the time comes to use them.

Privately I may confide to you that we argue as follows:—

The best British troops are those trained in India:

We are trained in India:

∴ we are the best British troops.

And we do our utmost to live up to it.

Yours ever,

ONE OF THE PUNCH BRIGADE.

P.S.—The Home Government has not, as we feared, entirely forgotten us. We have just been officially informed that we are entitled to benefit by the maternity clauses of the Insurance Act on and after 1st November, 1915.



DEWAR'S conjures the palate with its softness of satin, it raises the courage by its distinction and quality, and it cheers the body with the golden glow of Health. It holds up the Mirror to Truth and Honesty and Merit. "Be temperate—drink Dewar's Whisky."



Perrier

"The Champagne of Table Waters"

*The drink of the
British Officer
throughout the
world*

***The Battle-Cry of the Allies:
"Shoulder to Shoulder, in War and Trade."***



Old Lady. "So, WILLIAM, YOU'VE COME BACK TO US WOUNDED, I HEAR. HOW DID IT HAPPEN?"

William. "SHELL, MUM."

Old Lady. "A SHELL! OH, DEAR, DEAR! AND DID IT EXPLODE?"

William. "EXPLODE, MUM? NOT LIKELY. IT JUST CREEPT SOFTLY UP BEHIND—AND BIT ME!"

CASES.

By a V.A.D.

WINGFIELD HOUSE, the voluntary hospital we were attached to, was an off-shoot of St. Elmo's, the large and dignified mother institution which was supposed to feed us with patients when it happened to remember our existence. No wonder we thought we were forgotten when week after week went by and the wards, which we had rubbed and scrubbed and polished till we could see our enthusiastic faces in practically everything, were still lacking those stricken heroes we longed to succour, help and comfort. At last, in answer to a tentative inquiry from our Commandant, we received a rather curt official intimation that we need not expect any cases for at least a week. On the strength of this the Matron took the night off, the three trained Sisters went home for the week-end, and the ward-maids went to the "pictures," leaving me and Doris and the Commandant in charge, and rather at a loose end. There was a lovely big fire in the kitchen, so Doris and I improved the shining hour by washing our hair, and we were just finishing off the drying process when the Commandant came in, and, being struck by the soundness of the scheme,

followed our example. She had just got to the lathery stage of the shampoo when there came an imperative knock at the entrance door. I dropped my brush, bundled my hair into my cap, which fortunately is one of the kind that covers a multitude of sins, and went to see who it was. There stood an R.A.M.C. man and a big motor ambulance drawn up at the gate.

"What have you got there?" I gasped.

"Seven cases for you, Sister," he replied cheerfully. "From St. Elmo's."

"Oh, but—" I cried; "there's some mistake. We were told none were coming till next week."

The R.A.M.C. man shook his head.

"I don't know anything about that, Sister," he said. "This is Wingfield House. My orders was to bring 'em here, and I can't take 'em back."

"Oh no, of course not," I said hastily, my head in a whirl.

"My mate'll give me a hand to bring 'em in," he continued briskly; "and we'll set 'em down in the 'all till you show us where to take 'em."

I flew to the kitchen with the news, and I shall never forget the expression on our Commandant's face as she lifted it from the basin. But she was great. Giving her hair a quick mop up with

a towel, she thrust it into her cap, had her apron on in a jiffy, and, ignoring the soapy water trickling down her back, gave orders as if she were on parade. The discipline and training Doris and I had undergone told too. Spurred by heavy footsteps in the entrance and the sound of helpless burdens being carefully set down, in less than ten minutes we had the fire blazing in the ward, the beds turned down, kettles boiling and cocoa simmering, and everything ready to hand. Then, led by the Commandant, we went to receive our first cases, and found that the R.A.M.C. men had triumphantly deposited in the hall—seven cases of blankets!

"Lady recommends Woman, lived with her six years, plain cook, or would go abroad with lady, look after children, or Ireland."

Morning Paper.

MR. BIRRELL might be glad of her as an under-study.

"The Board of Guardians on Wednesday considered the question of Christmas extras for the Workhouse inmates, and decided to curtail the festive fare. On this occasion roast beef will take the place of boiled beef, and the quantity per head is to be 6-ozs. instead of the usual four and a half."

East Grinstead Observer.

The delighted inmates are ready for any amount of curtailment on these lines.

A WOUNDED HERO.

(By ONE OF THEM).

I LAID my head back comfortably against the pillows and glanced at Eleanor sideways.

"And now," I said, "you must never forget that I am a wounded hero—wounded hero, that is, as long as I am wounded, and then of course a hero pure and simple. This implies that our relative positions will not be quite what they were before the War."

Eleanor looked at me suspiciously. I should explain that she has an incredibly low opinion of my activities in every field of human endeavour that I have so far entered. She has also a scorn for my personal appearance, which in her less imaginative moments renders her most unwilling to be seen with me at public functions. Indeed, it has always been a source of permanent and unconcealed amazement to her relations and of modified surprise and gratification to myself that she should ever have chosen me for a husband at all. But that is another story, which I will tell upon another occasion.

"Pooh," said Eleanor.

I allowed a *soupeçon* of pain to mingle with the "wounded hero" look which I had been practising in front of the looking-glass every morning for a fortnight and was wearing at the moment.

"But if I am not a wounded hero is it not clear," said I, with a happy touch of the Socratic method, "is it not clear that I must be a wounded coward? Perhaps you suggest," said I with growing heat, "that I myself shot myself through the leg?" (I was suffering from the uncomplicated passage of a German bullet through my thigh).

Eleanor was by this time frankly scornful. "My dear child," she said, "no one who looks like you look could ever be a real hero," and she gave me one of her firm glances, clearly expecting by decisive treatment at the start to banish this latest bogie from my brain.

"That's because your mother brought you up on novels in which the hero stood six-foot-odd in his stockings, had eyes of flame and an unnatural supply of honey-coloured hair. Such men are out of date nowadays. Their height would prove fatal to them in a trench even if their constitution proved equal to the preliminary hardships. No, Eleanor, heroes nowadays are made of less obvious stuff."

I closed my eyes, an invalid ruse which I often found effective. Were she less invincibly attractive in all her ways I should describe Eleanor's comment as something between a snuffle and a sniff.

"There are proud moments ahead of you," I went on. "As, for example, when you are able to drive by my side round and round Hyde Park in my grandparents' motor. Picture to yourself how the women in the crowd will nudge each other as we glide under the arch at Hyde Park Corner; how they will murmur 'Lucky girl! Lucky girl!'"

I paused a moment for any comments which Eleanor might make on this sunny forecast. I judged, however, from her expression that her thoughts were not on the happy tour which I had been planning for her. I felt that I must strike a nobler note.

"And then nothing is more certain than that the KING and QUEEN will visit this hospital," I went on. "Twice already since I was here it has been reported that Their Majesties were coming; and if the startling consequences which this announcement has had upon the flagging energies of the V.A.D.'s. have sometimes tempted me to doubt whether the rumour started so far away as Buckingham Palace there is little doubt that, upon the next occasion, Their Gracious Majesties will by their actual presence in our midst banish so unworthy a suspicion."

I stopped to recover my breath after this unexpectedly long sentence. Eleanor's eyes were far away.

"On that day the procedure will be something like this," I said, looking prophetically out of the window. "My bed will be placed in a prominent position upon the hospital lawn. I shall wear my green pyjamas and a brown woolly waistcoat secured by a safety-pin at the throat. The fissure in my leg will be hidden beneath a red blanket. The drawn expression on my face will be released into a slightly wan smile as the Royal couple approach. I shall indicate you standing behind me at a suitable distance with Griselda in your arms, and I shall say, 'Perhaps Your Majesties will allow me to introduce to you my spouse and little one.' Whereupon you, wearing that jolly hat with little side wings that I like so much"—I glanced at Eleanor to see how this subtle compliment had been received, and discovered her with chin on her hand obviously paying no attention to what I was saying—"wearing that hat with rooks' wings projecting on each side which always attracts so much attention," I resumed fiercely and was rewarded by a flicker of Eleanor's eyelids; "will advance with dignity towards the Royal party. It might quite well happen," I said, "that they, observing the satisfactory nature of our offspring, should confer some suitable military or other distinction upon me."

"I can't make up my mind," said Eleanor slowly, "whether to put Griselda into short clothes to-morrow or whether to wait till next month."

But a quarrel was averted by our daughter and, as we sometimes with ill-founded optimism describe her, our heiress. She had been asleep in my arms for at least ten minutes, but now awoke with small cries which developed, as she observed my moustached and still unfamiliar countenance, into a consecutive wail.

"There, there—did she want her mother, then?" said Eleanor quickly and, not without satisfaction, taking her from me.

That, I find, is one of the great disadvantages of a family of three in its initial stages. I am always the opposition, and my most flawless reasoning is always crushed by that solid majority of two. But Eleanor is generous in victory.

"You'll let me know in plenty of time if the KING and QUEEN are really coming, won't you?" she said, and kissed me.

There was irony in that kiss, certainly; but I still think that there was about it also a dash of something which I had never noticed in similar signs of recognition vouchsafed to me before the War.

SOUTHAMPTON.

THE sky is grey and the clouds are weeping;

Winter wails in the wind again;
Night with her eyes bedimmed comes creeping;

The sea is hidden in dusk and rain.

This is the gate of the path that leads us
Whither our duty the goal has set;
This is the way Old England speeds us—

Darkness, dreariness, wind and wet!

This is the gate where battle sends us,
Gaunt and broken, in pain and pride;
This is the welcome Home extends us—
Weeping rain on the cold grey tide.

Would we have balmy sunshine glowing
Over the blue from the blue above?
Rather the rain and the night wind blowing,

Rather the way of the land we love!

More Material for Sir A. Markham.

"Recruiting officers from Luton were again in attendance at the Infants' School on Tuesday afternoon for the purpose of attestation of recruits, when a good number of eligibles were dealt with."—*Luton News*.

"At Oldham Private John —, aged 1, was charged with being an absentee from the West Riding Regiment."

Lundee Evening Telegraph.

WHAT THE REVUE WILL HAVE TO COME TO.



ENTRANCE OF MALE BEAUTY CHORUS.



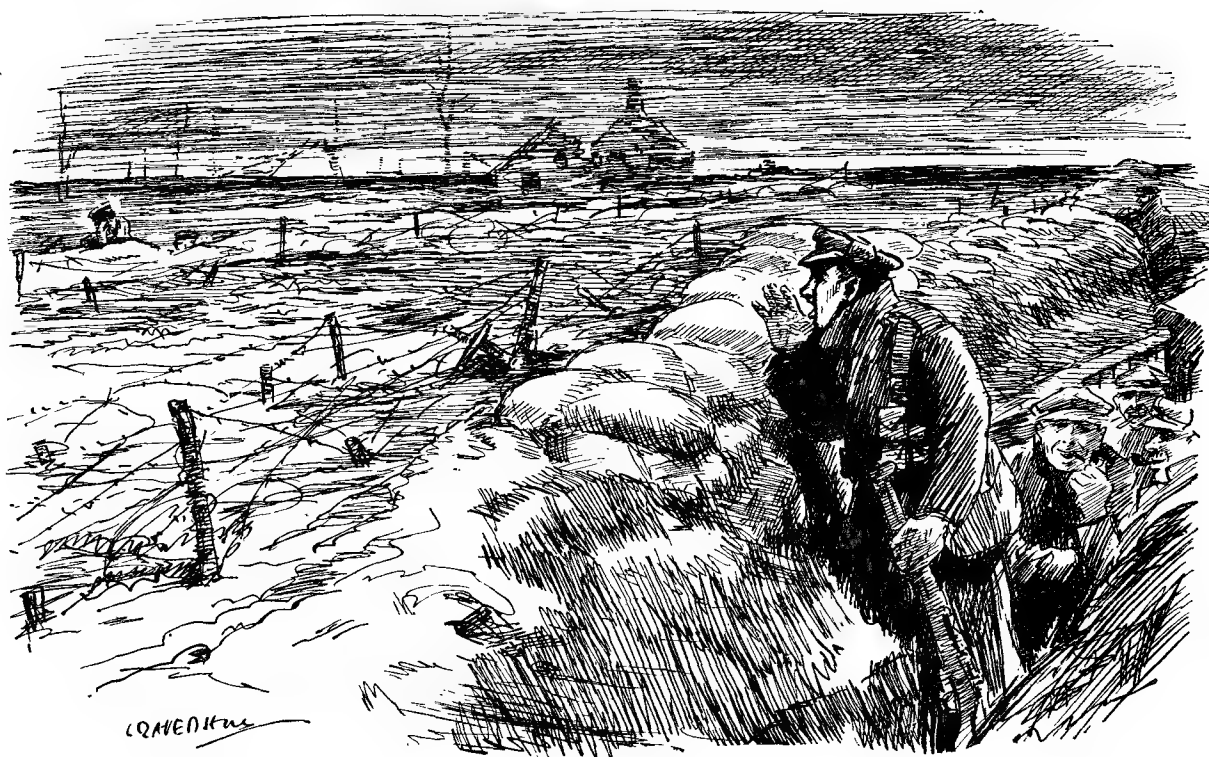
THE LEADING LADY AND JEUNE PREMIER
SING A LOVE DUET



AND DANCE A "PAS DE DEUX."



GRAND PATRIOTIC FINALE. OUR GALLANT BOYS ON SEA AND LAND.



CHRISTMAS AMENITIES.

German Sentry. "SHALL WE ZING YOU ZOME CAROLS TO CHEER YOU OOP?"

English Sentry. "NOA! SING US SOMETHING FUNNY. SING US THE 'YMN OF 'ATE'!"

YOUNG ROBIN RED.

WHY, from the point of view of man, is the robin the most sociable of birds? Why is he less affrighted by the phenomenon of a human being than any other feathered thing? I look in vain to the ornithologists for the reason. AUDUBON cannot tell me, MORRIS withholds the answer, and BOWDLER SHARPE is dumb. They can be great on his changing waistcoat, loquacious on his Winter song, and even too informative for a sensitive reader on his distressing habit of killing his parents; but they leave the reason of his passion for gardeners, his adoration for woodcutters, a mystery. And not only is the reason a mystery, but the very presence of the bird is a mystery too, for at one moment there is not a robin within miles, and there at the next, with the first prod at the earth, with the first fall of the chopper, a red-breast has materialised—saucy, sagacious, critical, vigilant.

It was, I fancy, DAN LENO who first remarked that he loved work; he could stand, he added, for hours and watch men working. Many have said it since, for low comedians are not too nice about repetition, but DAN, I believe, began it, and one almost thinks he got it from a robin. For it is the robin's

ideal of pleasure—to watch men work, and especially, as I say, gardeners and woodcutters. That a gardener should be popular is natural enough, for he is continually turning over fresh mould and revealing new and succulent articles of diet; and yet I don't think the robin's is cupboard love either. I have observed a robin watching a gardener for long periods and he has never touched food; and the woodcutter's toil is of course wholly unproductive of nutrition. It must be on the robin's part an honest liking for human society, mixed with curiosity and possibly a freakish pleasure in playing the foreman, the gaffer. Certainly no gaffer, not even the most detested, ever did less or surveyed more searchingly.

Let us then leave it as a blend of inquisitiveness and friendliness; but why the thrush is devoid of it, and the sparrow and the goldfinch and the wagtail, is a problem for the Gilbert Whites of our day. These birds almost equally haunt the lawn, but at the first sight of man they are off.

One particular robin that I have in mind is so fascinated by the spectacle of the labourer, no matter in what capacity, that to-day he actually paid attention to me, who do no more than drive a reluctant pen. I had occasion to consult a book in a garden room, and

he observed me walking thither and followed. The day for once being sunny I left the door open; and in flew the robin to see what on earth I could be about. I reached down one volume, he perched on another—a dictionary. That displeasing him, he flew to a row of DICKENS; from these to a new novel on the table, then to a bust of JULIUS CÆSAR, and again to LILLYWHITE'S *Scores and Biographies*. It was then that I came away, the robin preceding me by a couple of yards. All the way back to the house he flitted about me, so that I felt like an Italian prince I once saw leaving Venice, after a civic ceremony, in his motor-boat, escorted by aeroplanes.

Half-an-hour later I chanced to go into the kitchen, and there the robin was again, watching the cook. Two persons in so small a room being too much for him, he made for the door, not in the foolish panicky style of the ordinary bird that has strayed indoors, but with quiet precision.

And now I am wondering if science that can do so much cannot utilise and direct this remarkable gift of espionage. Flitting silent as a spirit and resented by no man, not even a German, what valuable information a robin might collect, and, crossed with a parrot, what valuable information he might impart!



RELUCTANT SWAINS.

GERMANIA (*under the mistletoe*). "DO YOU KNOW YOU'RE THE ONLY THREE GENTLEMEN WHO'VE KISSED ME?"

THE DAUNTLESS THREE (*aside*). "AND WE COULDN'T VERY WELL GET OUT OF IT!"

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Commons, Monday, December 13th.—Profound mystery broods over fate of E. JONES, Member for Merthyr-Tydvil. Has not for more than a fortnight been seen in his usual haunts, including House of Commons. Rumoured he has accepted service in ranks of Y.M.C.A. UNDER-SECRETARY FOR WAR, pressed for information, loftily replied, "I do not represent the Young Men's Christian Association in this House."

That made clear, committed himself to statement that missing Member had "gone to the Near East"—personal addresses necessarily vague just now—under auspices of the Association.

MARKHAM, always practical, suggested that the vagrant should be captured, brought home and enrolled as a recruit under Lord DERBY's scheme. Cold water thrown on proposal by expression of doubt whether the hon. Member was "big enough round the chest."

Subject dropped. Member for Merthyr left missing.

"Curious how phrases recur," mused the MEMBER FOR SARK. "TENNANT protesting that he does not represent the Young Men's Christian Association (which he might well do) recalls BOBBY SPENCER's famous declaration which, some time in the last century, amused a crowded House. Interposing in debate on a question relating to wages of farm labourers, BOBBY, dressed in height of fashion, his lofty collar gleaming round his stately neck, turned languid eyes upon the SPEAKER, and remarked, 'Sir, I am not an agricultural labourer.'"

Business done.—CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER moved Second Reading of Bill authorising purchase of all suitable American and Canadian securities held in this country. Some criticism of details by financial experts. But Second Reading conceded without dissent.

Tuesday.—Question of payment of Members to the front again. On this occasion Ministers roped in. COWAN asked whether in order to reinforce by example appeals for personal sacrifice addressed by Ministers of the Crown to all classes of the community the PRIME MINISTER would take steps to reduce by not less than twenty-five per cent. emoluments of public servants, including Ministers and private Members of House of Commons, in receipt of salaries exceeding £300 per annum.

PREMIER wouldn't hear of such a thing. Income of Ministers and Members is, he said, taxed in common with other classes of the community. Pressed by succession of questions he rose to full height of his commanding personality. Unconsciously assuming attitude reminiscent of AJAX defying the lightning, he said, "I take my salary and am going to continue taking it."

Great weight lifted from mind of Members uneasily watching growth of movement. If Ministers will not consent to reduction of their salaries why

irrelevancy, he was entreated to "Put another penny in the slot."

Business done.—Bill extending life of present Parliament passed second reading without threatened division. To this end BONAR LAW contributed powerfully persuasive speech.

House of Lords, Wednesday.—Lord DERBY, rising this afternoon to reply to question as to measure of success attendant upon his Recruiting Scheme, met with reception of warmth rare in this chilly atmosphere. The superb service he has done the State by strenuous, unremitting, well-directed efforts to bring men to the colours recognised by Lord CREWE in brief speech of graceful congratulation.

As LEADER OF THE HOUSE said, Lord DERBY is better fitted than any other man for gigantic task undertaken. Might have put it that he is the only man willing and able to do the work. His personal qualities, his experience, military and civil, his friendly relations with all classes throughout the country, political and social, combine to give him a unique position. History will write many glowing pages recording individual achievements since the War began. None is more splendid than that of the man who succeeded in stirring the nation to the pitch of enthusiasm that makes possible the placing in the field of a fourth million of trained soldiers.

Business done.—Bill to amend Munition Act read a second time in Commons.

Thursday.—ATTORNEY-GENERAL, standing at Table to announce on behalf of self and SOLICITOR-GENERAL voluntary relinquishment of considerable portion of their Ministerial income presented noble figure to yearning eyes of almost crowded House.

Whilst others have been talking about self-sacrifice, with general tendency, strongly marked, to press its observance upon the favourable attention of their neighbours, the Law Officers of the Crown have simply achieved it. They save an exchequer drained by unprecedented expenditure for war purposes a joint sum amounting to £10,000 a year. If that be not enough they "are prepared to consent to any reduction our colleagues in the Government or the House of Commons consider is required by the necessities of the case."

If this doesn't fetch the Four-Hundred-Pounders nothing will.

Business done.—Increase of Rent Bill and other Government measures advanced a stage.



THE PRIME MINISTER DEFIES ASSAULTS ON HIS SALARY.

should private Members be called upon to illustrate their lectures on economy and self-denial on part of general public by relinquishing portion of the £400 a year which they voted to themselves in time of peace and prosperity?

Loud cheers supported PRIME MINISTER in his heroic determination.

COWAN, now and later, had rather a bad time with the Four-Hundred-Pounders. His conversation with PREMIER interrupted by apparently irrelevant questions.

"Will the right hon. gentleman," one asked the PREMIER, "consider the high profit of manufacturers of penny-in-the-slot gas meters?"

Gas meters turned on again in course of COWAN's speech on moving rejection of Parliament Bill. Called to order by SPEAKER with instruction to avoid



IF WE HAD BEEN PRUSSIANS.

SCENES FROM A REVISED HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

EDWARD III. (to QUEEN PHILIPPA, after the taking of Calais). "WOMAN, YOU MEDDLE. WAR IS WAR! BESIDES, YOU ARE TOO LATE."

KITTY: A WAR PORTRAIT.

FOUR years ago, when down at Sheen,
I stayed with Hale, a college crony,
My godchild Kitty, just fifteen,
Lived mainly for her dogs and pony;
She was a cheerful, slangy kid;
She played a dashing game of hockey;
And everything she said or did
Was "rotten," or "top-hole," or
"rocky."

Then Kitty took a studious line,
And sought to "petrify her tutors";
She banned the British Philistine,
And sniffed at cricketers and shooters;
She read and acted in Greek Plays,
Discountenanced the social scurry,
And spent laborious nights and days
With SOPHOCLES and GILBERT
MURRAY.

Another year came swiftly round,
And, yielding to a primal passion,
Miss Kitty in the van was found
Among the votaries of fashion;
Her hair was up, her skirts were down;
She made a cult of modish follies;
And Pekinese of golden-brown
Supplanted her devoted colliers.

Then came the War, and all the traits
Whose growth her elders were afraid of

Dislimned, revealing to our gaze
The real stuff that she was made of;
Rebuking, too, the cynic pens
That quoted the Virgilian *notum*
Quid possit femina furens,
And showing us the New Factotum.

With both her brothers at the Front,
Her father working at munitions,
She found the ancient pleasure-hunt
Repugnant to her new ambitions;
She cooked; she nursed; she sold her car;
She felt "more natural without it";
She ran the house without a jar
And never made a song about it.

There was no stricken household near,
No home too intimate with sorrow,
But gathered from her words of cheer
Solace and strength to face the
morrow;
And when the wounded saw her come
To sing them songs or write their
letters,
The grinding pains that grip and numb
Seemed to relax their cruel fetters.

So when I met the other day
This new, transformed, ennobled
Kitty
The gold had triumphed o'er the clay,
For pride was swallowed up in pity.

O woman, everlasting sphinx,
'Tis not the least of War's surprises
That from the ashes of a minx
A ministering angel rises!

A Christmas Tip.

"When you burst send to Blank's, New Street."—*Advt. in "Worcester Times."*

From a Parliamentary report:—

"Mr. Cowan (L.) rising to move the rejection of the Bill . . . Mr. Thorne (turning to Mr. Cowan):—'Go on: turn on the gas-meter. (Laughter.) Mr. Cowen (proceeding) . . .'"
Evening Paper.

It is a pity Mr. COHEN is no longer in the House, or he might have had a hand in this coincidence.

"It is a difficult matter to keep the custom of the Mayor and Corporation officially attending the Parish Church alive."
Provincial Paper.

The dead-head habit is so easily picked up at the theatre.

"Mr. McKenna said that there were a number of useful questions to facilitate saving by wage earners, and he would bring these before the committee which was going to investigate the honeymoon."—*The People.*

We trust this does not presage a tax on matrimony.



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HOW TO TOUCH THE WORKING MAN'S POCKET.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—You will have gathered by this time that I never like to be left out of any newspaper discussion that is going on, and I wish to assure you that I never put any restriction upon the publication of my views. You are quite at liberty to make any use you like of my opinions upon how the War Loan is to be introduced to the Working Man. A lot of weighty statements have already been made, explaining to us the preferences of the Working Man. There must, we are told, be no fluctuations because he doesn't like them, and no use of the words *per centum* because he doesn't understand them. There must be no vouchers because he has nowhere to keep them. There must be no distant date of repayment because he won't wait, and no conversion rights because he distrusts them. Again, the amount must be paid by instalments, so that he may be led to confuse the thing with furniture and goose-clubs. Finally—and this is crucial—(a) the money must be collected in the works; (b) the money must be collected in the home.

Such, Sir, is the current picture of the Working Man. I cannot say that I recognise him, but all the same I think we might set to work to smooth away these little difficulties and thereby open a clear path to success.

We can, in the first place, stop fluctuations once and for all by legislation which shall nail the loan to perpetual par. Anyone paying either more or less can be stuck in gaol, under the Defence of the Realm Act, for creating undue depression or inducing undue elation in the KING's subjects. No difficulty there. Again, there need be no trouble about the phrase *per centum*. It need not be mentioned. A plain fact should be stated in plain language. Let our motto be, "A tanner on every quid twice a year." That should be printed in bold type at the top of the scrip.

But this raises the question of scrip. Paper must be avoided at all costs. The Working Man distrusts paper. It is altogether too handy as a pipe-light when matches run short; besides, if he sticks it in a drawer, it is apt to get down the back; besides, in any other safe place the spring cleaning is certain to find it out, and we cannot be sure that the War will be over by the Spring. But why, Sir, need we insist on paper? It is a mere convention. The suggestion that the amount be tattooed on the holder's arm I reject, simply because, looking ahead to the time when the issue is redeemed, I can see no way out of it but amputation.



GLOOMY FORECAST OF DURATION OF THE WAR.

Youthful Delinquent (who has just been "corrected" by his mother). "YOU'LL BE S-SORRY FOR THIS WHEN I'M G-GONE TO THE WAR."

But there are other tokens, symbols or emblems besides paper. Nay, more, an opportunity opens up here for killing a second bird with the same old stone, by using the Government's acknowledgment for brightening the home. Why, I ask you, should it not take the form of a china dog for the mantelpiece? One dog for each pound subscribed. Ten dogs one time-piece. Ten timepieces one framed and signed portrait of Lord KITCHENER. I do not insist upon dogs. Local custom should be studied. There are districts where a pewter mug might be preferred. But can anyone quarrel with the principle? I think not.

Finally, in this scheme for providing concrete reminders of the investment,

the point about collecting by instalments will be found to have solved itself, as the application will be practically equivalent to purchasing furniture on the easy-payment plan. And, Sir, if it be really true that goose clubs have such an enormous vogue among the masses, why not throw in a goose?

There is generally a happy solution of our War difficulties if they are fairly faced by people of imagination.

I am, Yours as usual,
STATISTICIAN.

Our Helpful Contemporaries.

"A Littlehampton allotment gardener has dug up a parsnip forty-seven inches long—about 4 feet."—*Evening News*.

AT THE PLAY.

"WHO IS HE?"

SEVERAL influences had contributed to make an eccentric of *Lord Twyford of Twyford* (alias "*Mr. Parker*"). There was his parentage for one. His mother (I follow his own account) was an angel, and his father prematurely bald with a cast in his eye. On the female side he had inherited a taste for anonymous charity, which took the form of penny buns stuffed with half-crowns and distributed to hungry people under cover of darkness. The optical defect of the other parent (his premature baldness does not seem to have exerted any hereditary influence) was no doubt a determining factor in the son's choice of the microscope as a medium for nature-study. But, apart from this predisposition to a habit of life unusual in a Peer of the realm, his mind had been incidentally deranged by an unfortunate affair of the heart. His lady, jealous of the microscope which came between them, had jilted him in favour of a cousin of his, and the expenses of their elopement had been met by a forged cheque drawn in the name of the aggrieved party.

Obedying that instinct for secretiveness which was so excellent a feature in his philanthropy, *Lord Twyford* had fled from the ridicule of Society and under an assumed name had sought the shelter of obscure lodgings, from which he only emerged at nightfall. Here the smallness of his bag and the tendency to in consequence in his speech (the result of mental shock) might justly have roused suspicions; but the vagaries of a ground-floor lodger, however limited his luggage and however vague his explanations of himself, are never too closely scrutinised so long as he pays handsomely and in advance. Unhappily, however, "*Mr. Parker's*" escapade coincided with a Jack-the-Ripper scare, and his most innocent eccentricities (notably his nocturnal largesse of buns) soon had a sinister interpretation put upon them by a vigilant police. The misunderstandings that followed tended to develop an atmosphere of general insanity, and his landlady's behaviour, based upon a conviction that all was not what it should be in her lodger's head, fell under a like suspicion on his part. In the event, both his mind and the situation were cleared by the intervention, respectively, of a new love and an old solicitor, and all ended well along the simple lines of homely melodrama.

The charm of a scheme that has an eccentric for its leading character is that it gives you all the fun of farce without its cruder buffooneries. His



AN INTERRUPTED PROPOSAL.

Reversing the old story, "*Mr. Parker*" (Mr. HENRY AINLEY) actually says, "Shut that door," but his lady-love understands that "*Je t'adore*" is intended.

somersaults are mental and not physical. He does not catch his toe in a material tin-tack; he trips over a kink in his brain. Of course, under favourable conditions his eccentricity is liable to be infectious—to communicate itself to those for whom nature had never designed it; and before you can turn round you are over the borderland between comedy and farce. But in respect



"EXPENSIVE SIMPLICITY."

Irene Harding (Miss IRENE BROWNE) contrives to starve gracefully in Grafton Street frocks of the latest fashion.

of his protagonist the author can always claim the perquisites of irresponsibility. He can always say, "This is a figure of comedy; just thus and thus my creation would behave in the life." Which indeed is unanswerable, for here there are no precedents to follow and no rules to break. It is true that my lord, by a disappearance which was bound to get into the papers, must defeat his own desire to escape ridicule; but then he is an eccentric. True that, for an alleged woman-hater, he falls rather rapidly in love with the first woman he meets after his jilting; but what would you? He is an eccentric. And we of the audience are just as pleased as the author with this transparent device; we love to flatter ourselves that we have the good sense to prefer comedy to farce.

Mr. AINLEY, as he proved in the more serious and sustained effort demanded of him in *The Great Adventure*, is our one man for this kind of part. It was a marvel how many fresh tricks of voice and gesture he had invented to distinguish his new character from the one in the earlier play that so nearly resembled it in its broader features. His personality was an irresistible delight; but the success of the play—and he would be the first to acknowledge it—was not due to him alone; he owed much to the services of Miss CLARE GREY and Mr. FREDERICK GROVES as the lodging-house-keepers. Types of a commonplace humanity not easily diverted from its fixed orbit, they both made an admirable foil to his eccentricity, and their closely-observed realism set from the start the right key of comedy.

With the character of *Irene Harding* neither Miss IRENE BROWNE nor the author was quite happy. As for the actress, she never looked the part of a starved typist; the studied artistry of her auburn chevelure and the expensive simplicity of her frocks gave her a false air. For the author, he put some very indifferent talk into her mouth, and constantly left her pendent in the most embarrassing silences while he busied himself with Mr. AINLEY. One's sympathy is naturally prepared to go out to any woman whose heart entertains a Peer unawares, but we received a very niggardly encouragement. And, by the way, I venture to suggest that *Lord Twyford of Twyford* a little mislaid his nobility when he thought it necessary to administer so much sparkling Moselle to the lady in order to bring her to the point of accepting his hand.

The unimportance of these complaints must be the measure of my appreciation. I am not in a position to say



Little Girl. "MUMMY, WHAT DO YOU THINK SANTA CLAUS WILL BRING ME THIS CHRISTMAS?"

Mother (anxious to economise). "OH, PERHAPS HE WON'T COME THIS YEAR. HE MAY BE AWAY AT THE WAR, AND THEN WHAT WILL YOU DO?"

Little Girl. "I EXPECT THEY'LL PUT A WOMAN ON INSTEAD."

in what exact proportions I should pay my gratitude to Mr. VACHELL who wrote the play, and to Mrs. BELLOC LOWNDES who made the novel from which it was "very freely" adapted; but between the two of them they put Mr. AINLEY in the way of giving me an extremely pleasant evening. O. S.

"THEY ALSO SERVE . . ."

ACROSS the orchard you can see from my study window the entrance to the "Green Man." My wife is always wanting to have trellis put up to shut out the view.

"How should we ever know the time?" has been my invariable reply.

You see every morning precisely at eleven o'clock William, the sexton, arrives at the entrance to the hostelry. At a quarter past twelve Mrs. William (I don't think William possesses a surname) chases him out to come to dinner. When I discovered William's admirable punctuality I utilised him to check our clocks. It became a habit in our home to say, "You've plenty of time for the train. The dining-room clock is five minutes fast by William."

Even my wife recognised the usefulness of William, though with feminine ingratitude she lectured Mrs. William

at the Mothers' Meeting on the advantages of temperance. Once Mrs. William retaliated, "Ah, Mum, I see you know what the 'orrors of drink are in a 'ome."

Months before London went dry in the mornings our district was scheduled by the Board and a stern decree ordained that no licensed premises should open till twelve. The rule did not interfere with me who have given up the Hun lager which I drank in the happy times of peace. But I thought with horror of its effect on William.

At five minutes to eleven on the first morning of the new order I was at my window watching for William. I wanted to see the effect of the mental shock upon him. Could he break the habit of a generation? At ten seconds to eleven he appeared in the road and with his customary deliberation approached the door.

"Can it be possible that no one has warned the poor old man?" I thought. "What will he do when he finds that friendly door closed?"

I expected something superb in the way of dramatic denunciation. To my amazement William never even tapped at the door. He placed himself on the seat at the side of the porch and waited there solemnly till twelve o'clock.

When he arrived the following morn-

ing at his usual time I went across to speak to him.

"This new regulation is very trying, William," I said.

"Not a bit, Sir, not a bit," replied William cheerily.

"But you find it dull sitting here?"

"Not me, Sir. I'm goin' to show that other William that 'owever 'e tries 'e can't put me out o' my regular ways. Thirty-five year 'ave I been coming 'ere at eleven o'clock and no 'Un's goin' to upset me."

"But you haven't time to get your beer."

"If a man's got the proper spirit, Sir, 'e can manage it. Once it was just sip, sip with me, now it's swaller, swaller; and I gets my two pints in. We're goin' to win this War and I got to do my bit—and my bit means no interference with reglar 'abits and no grumblin'."

When Parliament is sitting and I have the blues about the War—strange that I never have the blues whilst Parliament is in recess—I look out for William, and his confident advent brightens my day. I see the determination in his face, and whatever the Cabinet may do I know that our William will wear out the person he cuttingly alludes to as "the other William."

SINISTER BONDAGE;

OR,

MINUTE BY MINUTE.

BY COMPTON SOMERSET MACKENZIE MAUGHAM.

I.

MICHAEL'S condition was atramental, of that there could be no doubt. Nor was he surprised to discover that, having walked due West since breakfast, which he had preferred not to eat, for the bloater had reminded him too poignantly of Lily's favourite supper dish, he was now pointing East with a slight inclination to North. Would his search never end? He wondered vaguely how his mother and his sister would greet him, in the improbable event of his ever seeing them again in the fuliginous atmosphere of Chelsea. Why had he said what he had unquestionably said to both of them? Dukeedinous memories crowded tumultuously into his mind. He saw himself again at Oxford buying first editions of WALTER PATER, drinking port and eating crystallized fruit at the J. C. R., making hay in a bad man's rooms, and generally making himself as disagreeable as possible to everybody he met. Had he really been the self-conscious and conceited prig that these memories pictured him as being? He supposed so, and the hypothesis filled him with delight. And now he lived with a murderer in Tossopot Street with a view to discovering Lily and eventually to becoming a Roman Catholic priest, after spending eight hundred pounds a year in purchasing mansions in various parts of London. Life was indeed a strange mixture. He shook himself and proceeded with his walk.

II.

As Michael neared the Thieves' Kitchen where he proposed to have his supper he became aware that someone was following him, someone whose footsteps made a curious clippity-cloppity sound on the pavement. In a flash Michael realised that it must be Philip who was thus pursuing him, and he turned round and confronted him.

"Look here," said Michael angrily, "why do you follow me like that? This is my beat, and I can't allow anyone with a club foot to come dogging me as you do."

Philip blushed deeply, which was a way he had when his deformity was harshly alluded to.

"By what right," he said bitterly, "do you presume to keep me away? You're not the only person whose thoughts and feelings matter. I know you're looking for Lily in all the shy haunts of London. Well, I'm looking for Mildred in the same places. Shall we search together?"

"If you like," murmured Michael, too tired to resist as he felt he ought to.

"Then," said Philip, "I will first tell you the story of my life in all its details."

"And I," said Michael, "will afterwards tell you the story of mine."

"Agreed," said Philip; "but I warn you not to be shocked. I have some dreadful things to relate;" and he told him how he had been born club-footed; how he had grown up and dabbled in painting in Paris without the least success; how he had all but poisoned his uncle, who had made a will leaving him his money; how he had nearly starved in London and been an assistant in a dressmaker's shop; and how he had betrayed the daughter of the friends who had rescued him from starvation and given him food and lodging in his misery. As he finished the first beams of the rising sun had begun to touch the houses with a golden glow and the furtive night-shapes were flitting back to their dens. Michael had fallen into a deep silence, though at the outset he had shown his usual tendency to interrupt. At last he spoke.

"To-morrow," he said, "if you will meet me at the same place I will tell you *my* story. I too have suffered; great God, how I have suffered!"—he brushed away his tears with a bright movement of his hand—"and I find in you a sympathiser, in spite of the terrible fact that you are a medical student. No matter," he added impulsively, "we are both degenerates, and that is a great thing."

"Yes," said Philip, "it has made us what we are. You with your club-footed mind and I with my club-footed foot, we owe more than we can express to degeneracy. And now let us pursue our search."

They linked arms and moved, supperless but united, towards the dawn.

(To be continued indefinitely elsewhere.)

THE TROOPER.

I've hollowed my back in the riding school,
Broken my neck and been damned for a fool,
Learnt to parry and point and guard
Till my arm was lead and my wrist went dead,
Wisped my fidgetting long-faced pard
Till he shone with a silky shine;
Learning "how" in the Cavalry,
The jaunty, jingling Cavalry,
What rides on the right o' the line.

Now here am I like a blinded mole,
Toil in a furrow and sleep in a hole
Dug in a grave twelve foot by three,
My strappings bust and my spurs all rust
With nothing but two mud walls to see
Sluiced with a driving sleet—
Me that was in the Cavalry,
The saucy, swaggering Cavalry,
Slogging my two flat feet!

I thinks all day an' I dreams all night
Of a slap-bang, Tally-Ho open fight,
One good chance on the open plain,
Then knee to knee, like a wave of the sea,
We'll blood our irons again and again
In thundering squadron line;
We'll give 'em a taste of the Cavalry,
The only original Cavalry,
And gallop 'em over the Rhine.

A Sinister Proposal.

One of the contributors to a discussion on "The Price of Milk" in *The Western Daily Press* is "A Bristol East Dairyman," who begins his letter:—"SIR,—Let us go to the fountain-head."

In *The Border Counties Advertiser* the Shropshire Yeomanry is asking for recruits "height 3 ft. 3 inches and upwards." This Bantam business is being a little bit overdone.

"LIQUOR IN THE WRONG PLACE.

"At the Ormskirk Sessions, to-day, a youth employed at the Bickerstaffe Collieries was fined two guineas for takin gintoxicating liquor into the mine."—*Provincial Paper*.

Something else besides liquor seems to have got into the wrong place.

"WANTED—Respectable and quiet home offered to parents desirous of leaving one child with good motherly lady, age 8 years upwards."
Statesman, Calcutta.

The maternal instinct develops very early in the East.



First Tommy. "ULLO, MATE, ANY LUCK?"

Second Ditto. "No, 'TAIN'T NO BLOOMIN' GOOD WITH THEM BLIGHTERS DISTURBIN' THE WATER LIKE THIS."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

Do you want a tonic for pessimists, and one that, as the medical advertisements say, shall not be an evanescent stimulant, but a real food for brain and heart and nerves? I can think of no better description of the book to which Mr. STEPHEN PAGET has given the name *Essays for Boys and Girls* (MACMILLAN). Do not be misled by the modesty of the Preface, in which the author says, "This book is for boys and girls only." It is not. It is for us all. There is no one of us but can feel strengthened by and profoundly grateful for such essays upon the War as these. Doubtless you know already the charm of manner that Mr. PAGET will bring to the discussion of his theme. These pages are full of it; and the effect of them, their sincerity and simplicity, and the fine spirit that they reveal, is profoundly moving. I should like to quote, but that I despair of finding any one extract that would give you an idea of the original; because there seems none of all the perplexities and sorrows and compensations of these tremendous days upon which we might not listen with advantage to so brave and persuasive a counsellor. Perhaps the chapter to which I should most like to call your attention is that headed "A Venture of Faith." To see the good that is working in all these horrors, and to write of it sanely and smilingly, without pose or any kind of affectation, that surely is no small thing. Read especially the passages of real beauty in which Mr. PAGET speaks of the consolation of knowing about some loved one at the Front that he is almost certainly far happier than ourselves

who stay behind. "To be on active service is to be living and working, set, like a diamond in a watch, at the exact centre of a nation's fate." That is one of many phrases that hold my memory. As a pictorial comment on the subjects of the essays the book contains sixteen cartoons, upon which, as they come from his own pages, Mr. Punch can say nothing more than that it is pleasant for him to see them in alliance with a text of such high aim and dignified achievement.

This, they tell us, is to be a Russian Christmas. And a very good kind of Christmas that is. Anyhow, the Slavonic note, already sounded in our theatres and costume-shops, has now spread to the nursery; and one of its echoes is the appearance of a volume of fairy tales, collected and translated from old Russian chap-books by Mr. ROBERT STEELE, and published under the title of *The Russian Garland* (McBRIDE), with a cover and six fascinating coloured pictures by Mr. J. R. DE ROSCISZEWSKI. This is altogether as it should be. In the time that is, I trust, coming, of greater social communion with our wonderful Eastern ally, it will be pleasant for little John and Ivan to be able to share such jolly memories, as for example how *Lybim* was befriended by the wolf, or how the horse of *Prince Astratch* flew over hills and towns. The odd thing is, however, the extent to which this volume reveals the tales of fairydom as already the common property of childhood. Here is a self-playing harp, a duck that lays golden eggs, and many other friends of our youth. Only the setting is different; but it is this that will provide a splendid new thrill for the special and very critical audience to whom

the book is addressed. Mr. ROSCISZEWSKI has caught the atmosphere of barbaric pearls and gold to a nicety. His pictures, of which one recording the equestrian feat of *Prince Astratch* is a long way my favourite, are vivid, bright-coloured, and dramatic, with just that touch of caricature that nurseries most appreciate. I hope there may be many in which *The Russian Garland* will this year find a place amongst their other seasonable decorations.

Mr. A. C. BENSON's latest volume, *Escape, and Other Essays* (SMITH, ELDER) may be briefly described as a double-barrelled apology—in the text, for the existence of its dream-loving author in a world of affairs; in the preface, for its own peaceful presence in the time of war. The argument, convincing enough it seems to me, is pretty much the same in each case, namely, that a civilisation which in the stress of ordinary business has need of the artist and poet should, even when in convulsion, still find room for the hopes and ideals of peace. Anything more different from a military despatch than these pages can hardly be imagined, and in spite of the high courage involved in the public declaration, in his essay on "Authorship," that he never refuses to give an opinion on the unpublished MSS. of recognised genius, I fail to picture anyone less pugnacious than the author would have himself appear in his deliberate, not to say complacent, self-revelation. Here you will find nothing more unrestful than a little mild telepathy and spiritism, a good deal of admirable if not particularly novel analysis, and quite a notable exposition of the author's own personality, all expressed in language that has purity and charm and, in its lower rather than its more unscalable heights, recalls at any rate the less vigorous half of the RUSKIN to whom the writer owes so much. Of the individual essays I think I like "Walt Whitman," "Literature and Life" and "School-days" as well as any; but honestly it is not so much what he says as the way he says it that counts.

The Extra Day (MACMILLAN) is one of Mr. ALGERNON BLACKWOOD's now famous mystery tales, duly diluted for children; and if the mystical child survives into this day of jangling telephones, mechanical toys and general sophistication there should be a happy audience for these topsyturvy adventures of *Tim*, *Judy* and *Maria*, *Uncle Felix* and *The Tramp*, and the extra day that came to them between Saturday and Sunday, when the clocks were stopped and they went out on the great quest. Mr. BLACKWOOD puts into his book besides that old, uncanny sense of doom and purpose behind the dark inanimate things, all the bright things too: birds and butterflies, flowers and shining clouds, and all very pleasantly and affectionately. If I never quite found out what the quest was, that is because I am really no genuine blackwoodsman. A willow by the

river's brim is to me just a willow, and not a sinister sentient being who for tuppence will strangle me with sinuous arms if I decide to camp on its island without its permission. Of course that is all due to the deplorable lack of faith that comes to disillusioned middle-age, and naturally it is hateful to have driven into one this conviction of sin. The fact is I was distinctly annoyed with *Uncle Felix* for taking *Judy*, *Tim* and *Maria*, who were simply the nicest imaginable children, out of their charming daily life and drawing them away over the border. I wish Mr. BLACKWOOD would bottle his bogey for once and let us have such an intimate and humorous account of lovable simple things and folk as he gives us in his first few chapters, which couldn't be better done.

In these days, when the facts of war are daily under our



THE SADDEST SIGHT OF THE WAR.
A GERMAN PROFESSOR WHO HAS MISLAID HIS BEER TICKET.

eyes, the novelist who chooses a fighting theme cannot well complain if a super-excellent standard of merit is demanded of him. Mr. L. COPE CORNFORD, when judged by such a standard, passes—but without distinction—in *The Lord High Admiral* (WILLIAMS AND NORGATE). He passes because he is the happy possessor both of style and of a real knowledge of his subject, but he fails to reach distinction because his hold upon our mind and our emotions is not sufficiently clinching. If, however, he is to be judged by a less exacting standard I grant him worthy of your immediate attention, and indeed, if only for his stories that have nothing whatever to do with fighting, he has a claim upon our gratitude. Possibly you are already acquainted with some of these tales, for I see "acknowledgments" duly recorded; but even so you will not mind reading again "The Almoner" and "The Photograph"—the gems of this collection. They prove that, with his gifted imagination, Mr. CORNFORD might easily afford to leave war-fiction to those writers for whom the obvious is an irresistible lure.

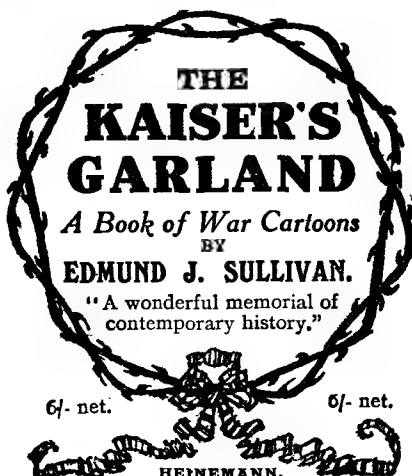
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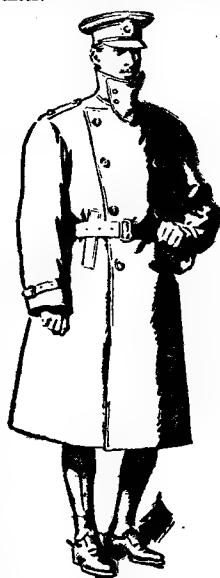
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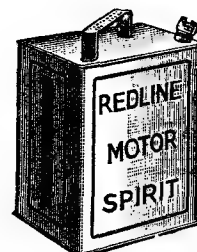
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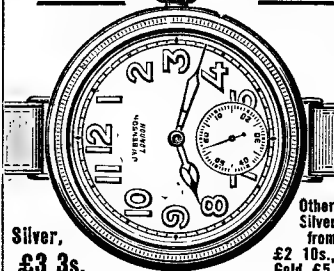
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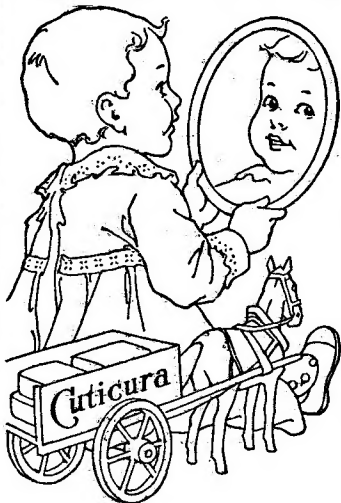
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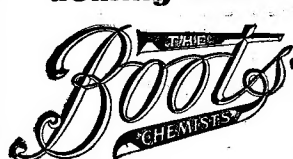
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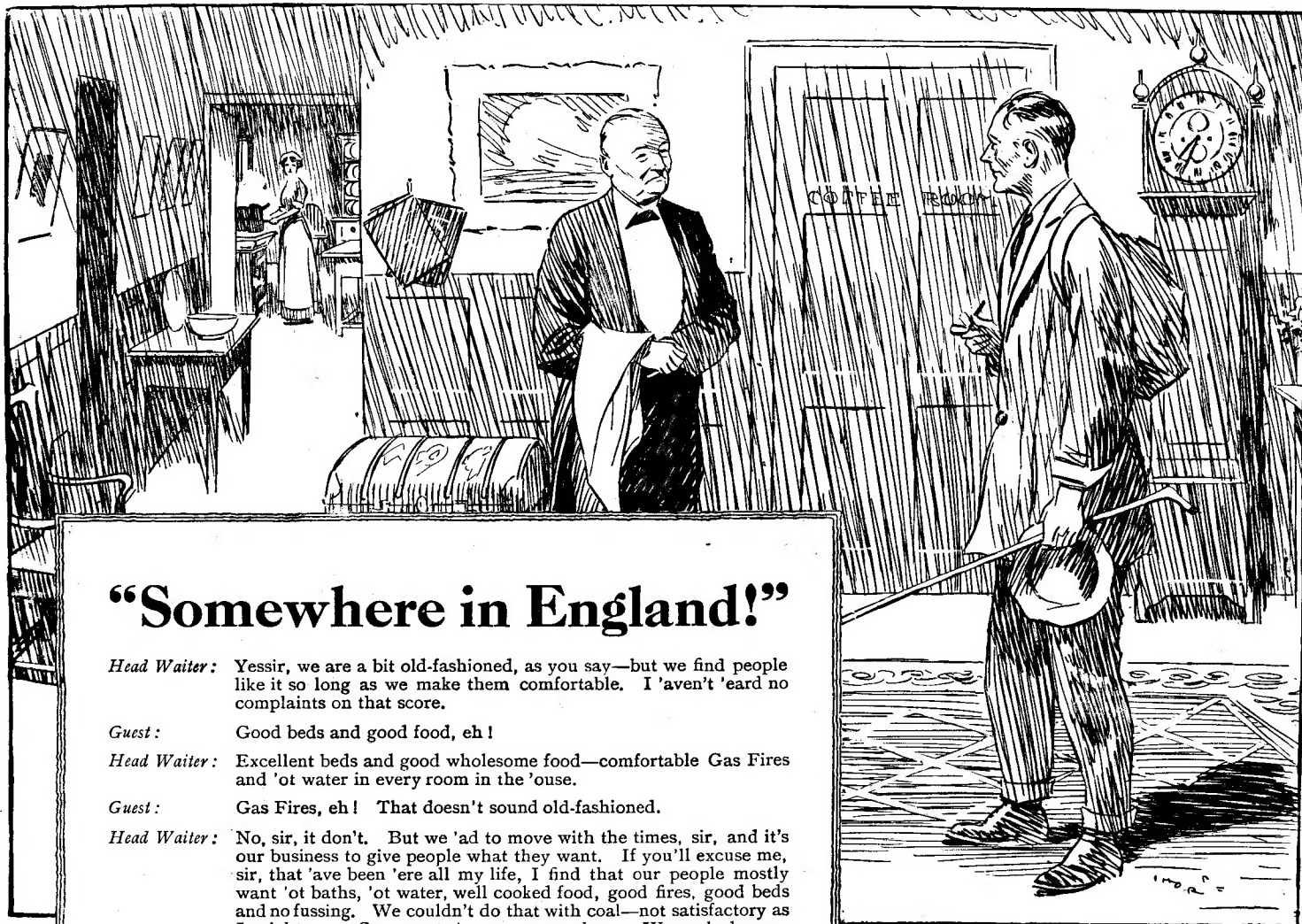
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Head Waiter: Excellent beds and good wholesome food—comfortable Gas Fires and 'ot water in every room in the 'ouse.

Guest: Gas Fires, eh! That doesn't sound old-fashioned.

Head Waiter: No, sir, it don't. But we 'ad to move with the times, sir, and it's our business to give people what they want. If you'll excuse me, sir, that 'ave been 'ere all my life, I find that our people mostly want 'ot baths, 'ot water, well cooked food, good fires, good beds and no fussing. We couldn't do that with coal—not satisfactory as I might say. So we puts in gas—everywhere. We cooks by gas, we lights by gas, we 'eats the water by gas and we 'as Gas Fires. So you can 'ave a 'ot bath in ten minutes if you want it, sir, a fire in your bedroom and whatever you like to order for dinner, sir, punctual to the minute.

Guest: That sounds top-hole—but where's the old-fashioned part come in?

Head Waiter: It don't come in, sir, so far as that's concerned. But there's the 'ouse, the furniture, the pictures and—if I may say so—the 'ome-liness of the place.

Guest: (*a trifle bored*) Well, well, I'll have that hot bath right away—if you'll get the bathroom ready.

Head Waiter: The bathroom is ready, sir, always. There's plenty of 'ot water, you'll find clean 'ot towels in the 'ot cupboard in the bathroom and the Gas Fire lighted in your room.

Guest: Right O!—and dinner at 8 sharp, please!

Head Waiter: What'll you 'ave, sir,—a nice sole, leg of mutton and sweets?

Guest: Well, if that isn't troubling the cook too much—I'm rather late, I'm afraid.

Head Waiter: No trouble at all, sir. You see, sir, *our* kind of comfort means comfort for *us* as well as our people. We don't 'ave no coals to carry, no fires to make up, no bathrooms to attend to—This 'ere gas, if I may say so, saves money and time, and—

Guest: You may say so at dinner time, please, I'm off to have that bath . . . (*ascends stairs slowly*) . . . Decent old boy, though he does talk a lot; and a real nice place. Thank heaven, I've struck a decent billet at last!
(*The bathroom door bangs sharply*).

For particulars of Gas Fires and Gas Water-Heaters, write to The British Commercial Gas Association, 47 Victoria Street, S.W.



ON Christmas Day, as on every other day throughout the year, food and firing, drugs and dressings, must be provided for the thousands who have been wounded in the great battle for civilisation, and who now lie in the war hospitals of France. The Enemy holds the Wealthy Manufacturing Districts of France, crippling the resources of our Gallant Ally. What finer Christmas Gift can there be than to further the work of the French Red Cross? The sick, the wounded, the dying, the prisoners—at what season of the year could we more appropriately remember and minister to their needs than at Christmastide? The smallest gift that we can give is welcome, the utmost that we can spare is not too much: all alike is gratefully received and turned to the best account.

Will YOU send your Christmas Gift to-day to

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